

the Shofar

Etz Chayim Conservative Synagogue's Monthly Newsletter

OCTOBER, 2023

TISHREI/CHESHVAN, 5784

For information on joining
virtual services and events, please see our website:

<http://www.etzchayim-hsv.org>

FROM THE RABBI

Is the Shofar about Sukkot?

Unlike Pesach and Shavuot, Sukkot doesn't commemorate a specific event in the lives of our ancestors. Rather, "for seven days all citizens in Israel shall dwell in booths, in order that future generations may know that I made the Israelites dwell in booths when I brought them out of Egypt" (Lev. 23:42-43).

So the holiday of Sukkot, beginning Friday night, September 29 and culminating in Simchat Torah, Sunday October 8, commemorates our ancestors following God through a wilderness. They didn't have houses. They lived in tents or booths. And so at this season we express our gratitude for all that we have. We sit in a sukkah in order to really feel gratitude for the fact that we live in a house!

Now here's something about Sukkot that maybe you didn't know. The Chumash published by the Conservative movement points out that the Torah doesn't explain why a shofar is sounded on the first day of Tishre (Rosh Hashanah). And our Chumash concludes "most probably it was to indicate

the advent of the pilgrimage of Sukkot, which began exactly two weeks later" (page 1459). In other words, it is suggested that the shofar is not blown for Rosh Hashanah at all. It's blown to prepare us for Sukkot!

Most of us say that it's a wake-up call to do teshuvah. That is my preferred understanding. But it's always good to know some alternatives!

Happy Sukkot,

Stephen Listfield

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Shalom Etz Chayim Family,

Yom Tov as the festivals continue. Sukkot Services run from the September 29 kid-friendly service at 6:30 PM through October 6 (Friday– Friday). October 1 at 4 PM in the Sukkah (in the event of rain we will move to the sanctuary), enjoy a special Musical Concert in support of Huntsville Food Pantries. This year we are

highlighting Jewish songwriters/composers. Also, bring a kosher snack to eat and drink in the Sukkah. Admission is a donation of some food bank items such as: canned proteins, canned beans, pasta & canned sauce, canned vegetables, peanut butter, pantry and cooking staples, baby formula and baby food. Please, no glass containers, opened food, or expired items. Remember, you can leave donations for the Food Pantry year-round in the designated foyer boxes. At 10 AM on October 22, bring power tools to help disassemble the Sukkah.

On Friday evening, October 6, Shemini Atzeret begins. Simchat Torah begins on Saturday evening, October 7, with a Potluck Dinner at 5:15 PM followed by services. RSVP by phone call or text what kosher food you will bring to share (main dish, salad, dessert) to Sandra Wiederecht. If you haven't noticed, our food events are stellar, and here is your chance to share a kosher dish. If you are not sure exactly what food you can bring, our potlucks are dairy, so no meat unless it is specifically mentioned. For more information, our kosher guidelines are posted on the website, <http://etzchayim-hsv.org>. Also, I love that our services are fully participatory. All voices rise together in song and prayer.

Jews have an obligation to maintain health. In keeping with a tradition of health and its supporting technology, we now have a defibrillator on the bima, and nine congregation members are trained to use it. The group is trained on other health and safety topics, as well.

Almost any house of worship has a business aspect behind the scenes. In order to keep our dues relatively low, we need members to each do their fair share monetarily and in human capital. Etz Chayim's synagogue dues and donations go primarily to items that include the Rabbi contract (9-visits), building maintenance, utilities, technology, insurance,

and Shabbaton luncheons. To keep costs down, Etz Chayim does not hire employees to perform the secretarial or administrative day-to-day work of the synagogue. Most activities are organized and performed by our dedicated members and lay leaders. If we can spread jobs around, and everyone pitches in, it is not a burden on just a few families. What is your specialty: hospitality, food preparation, Jewish Education, Jewish Rituals, children's services, landscaping, music, Purim Shpiel, Seder, Sukkah construction, communications, technology, building security? Be a member, volunteer. Make praying and playing with us more rewarding and meaningful.

The Board is hard at work reviewing our Bylaws. The Bylaws committee's goal is to make it easier to get work accomplished, especially at congregational meetings. The congregation will get a chance to review and vote on any proposed policy changes. Up-to-date calendar information can be found in the Shofar, on our website, Facebook page, and weekly emails.

Love seeing you at any of our gatherings,

Lynne Edmondson

SUKKAH BUILDERS

A big thank you to the men who came out on a Sunday morning to build the Sukkah.

Marvin Kalachman, Bill Brigadier, Bill Goldberg, Scott Lawrence, Howie Ross, Fred Kolchin, Bob Feigenblatt, Richard & Nathan Shepard, & Lou Weiner. You guys are the best.

Max

ONEGS

Sep 29 Shepard
Oct 06 Camenker
Oct 13 Rosenthal
Oct 20 Kolchin
Oct 27 Lyonnois

REMINDER

If you think that the kitchen needs anything, let me know. Please do not purchase it yourself, as we end up with an assortment of items we don't necessarily need.

Thank you,

Natha

SYNAGOGUE BOOK CLUB

The Book Club has undertaken the study of the development of Zionism in the United States from the late 1800's to 1939. We are plowing through the scholarly book, "The Emergence of Zionism in the US," by M. Raider. The book emphasizes the activities of the Labor (Socialist) Zionist movement in their efforts to get American Jews to become pioneers in Palestine and to support the development of the Jewish community in that country.

Our intelligent discussion of the topic will be held on Thursday, November 9, at 11:30, at the synagogue. You are invited to participate or just come and listen to the intelligentsia.

Max



DONATIONS

General Fund

In Honor of the High Holidays
Laura King
Brenda Liles
Shane Silverton Maddox
Millie & Max Rosenthal

Outdoor Lighting Fund

In Memory of Gertrude and Perry Schlein
from their daughters Natha Hancock &
Robin Slomka and their families.

CONGREGATION MEMBER SIGN-UP

Member Sponsored Oneg Shabbat:
Each family provides 2 onegs a year. Sign-up with Karen Feigenblatt to bring challah, sweet desserts and savory treats.

Member Sponsored Rabbi Hospitality: Sign-up with Linda Kolchin.

Families each sign up to prepare 1 of the 2 meals below:

- 1) Sisterhood sponsors the Kiddush Luncheon on Rabbi weekends. Sign up to prepare the luncheon by either using the sign-up sheet in the kitchen or by texting or calling Sandra Wiederacht. Two families usually pair up to cook for this luncheon.
- 2) The Roberts family sponsors the Ted Roberts Memorial Sunday Brunch on Rabbi weekends. Contact Shirley Roberts by using the sign-up sheet in kitchen, or by texting or calling her. One or two families generally prepare this breakfast or brunch.

Lynne

SISTERHOOD

Hello All,

We have posted sign-up sheets in the kitchen asking for volunteers from the entire EC congregation to plan and prepare a Kiddush Luncheon (sponsored by Sisterhood) or a Ted Roberts Memorial Brunch (sponsored by the Roberts family). If you have questions about the details, just check with Sandra Wiederecht (Kiddush) or Shirley Roberts (Sunday Brunch). Most Sisterhood members can give you some information as well.

Lunch Bunch will be held on October 16th. Let's get together for a good time! This month, we'll meet at Viet House on Airport Road at 12:30 PM. **RSVP by October 9** to me. Text me at 256-651-8125 or email bailabat@comcast.net.

Brenda



The poster is for a "Sisterhood Lunch Bunch" event. It features a yellow background with black text. At the top, there are two small decorative banners: "Pho / Vietnamese Noodle Soup" and "Crisp Pork / Rice Bowls". The main title "SISTERHOOD LUNCH BUNCH" is in large, bold, black letters. Below it, the text reads "LET'S MEET UP AND ENJOY A GOOD VISIT, A GOOD LUNCH, AND A GOOD TIME!". The location "VIET HOUSE" is prominently displayed in large, bold, black letters, with "975 AIRPORT ROAD" underneath. The date and time "OCTOBER 16TH AT 12:30 PM" are clearly stated. RSVP information includes "RSVP TO BRENDA BY OCTOBER 9TH", the email "bailabat@comcast.net", and the phone number "256-651-8125". At the bottom, there are two more small decorative banners: "Pho / Vietnamese Noodle Soup" and "Crisp Pork / Rice Bowls".

UPCOMING EVENTS

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sep 28 | 4 PM, volunteers help complete construction of the sukkah;
4:30 PM, volunteers help decorate the sukkah |
| Sep 29-
Oct 06 | Sukkot: morning services
9:45 AM daily, Kiddush in the sukkah daily at Noon |
| Sep 29 | Erev Sukkot services beginning with a Children's Service at 6:30 PM, regular service is 7:15 |
| Oct 01 | Music in the Sukkah Fundraiser, 4 PM, admission price is Food Pantry donations |
| Oct 06 | Hoshana Rabbah morning service, 9:45 AM. Then Shabbat Shemini Atzeret services, 7:15 PM |
| Oct 07 | Shabbat Shemini Atzeret morning & Torah service, 9:45 AM. Yizkor following Torah Service, approximately 11 AM. Then a Pot Luck Dinner at |

5:15 PM followed by 7:15 PM,
followed by Hakafot followed by
Torah reading at 6:30 PM

- Oct 08 Simchat Torah
- Oct 16 Sisterhood Lunch Bunch, 12:30
- Oct 22 10 AM, volunteers needed to
bring tools and help take down
the sukkah



SUKKOT

Etz Chayim volunteers (we need you!)
will complete construction of the sukkah
on September 28 at 4 PM, and we will
decorate it at 4:30 PM.

Please join us for this fun mitzvah!

On September 29, there will be Erev
Sukkot services, with a short Children's
Service beginning at 6:30 PM.

BIRTHDAYS

- Oct 02 David Wiederecht
- Oct 03 Zev Roberts
- Oct 03 Ellie Meyer
- Oct 13 Max Rosenthal
- Oct 14 David Rosenthal
- Oct 16 Jonah Roberts
- Oct 20 Marvin Kalachman
- Oct 20 Zachary Persons
- Oct 21 Ethan Hall
- Oct 21 Frederick Kolchin
- Oct 23 Paulette Goldstein
- Oct 23 Marla Polin
- Oct 24 Cynthia Elliott
- Oct 27 Carolyn Palermo

ANNIVERSARIES

- Oct 09 Nannette & Gary Schwartz
- Oct 09 Susan & Larry Levitt
- Oct 24 Carolyn & Bob Palermo
- Oct 26 Michelle & Jonathan Persons
- Oct 27 Millie & Max Rosenthal

YAHRZEITS**

- | | | |
|--------|------------|---------------------------|
| Sep 26 | 11 Tishrei | Murray Rosenthal* |
| Sep 26 | 11 Tishrei | Irving Gettleman |
| Sep 28 | 13 Tishrei | Bernard Fisher |
| Sep 29 | 14 Tishrei | Terry Lee Green* |
| Oct 01 | 16 Tishrei | Capt. Robert M. Secher* |
| Oct 05 | 20 Tishrei | Randy Merrill Sacks* |
| Oct 05 | 20 Tishrei | Alex Greenbaum |
| Oct 05 | 20 Tishrei | Mariam Wertheim* |
| Oct 11 | 26 Tishrei | William (Bill) Greenbaum* |
| Oct 12 | 27 Tishrei | Louis Klazmer |
| Oct 13 | 28 Tishrei | Bella Flank* |
| Oct 14 | 29 Tishrei | Shirley Brown Weinman* |
| Oct 14 | 29 Tishrei | Shirley Singer Freeman |
| Oct 14 | 29 Tishrei | Leo Krell |
| Oct 14 | 29 Tishrei | Rose Natt* |
| Oct 15 | 30 Tishrei | Harold Pizitz |

Oct 17	02 Cheshvan	Amby Jean Crocker
Oct 18	03 Cheshvan	Sarah Goldstein
Oct 18	03 Cheshvan	Sarah Osovsky*
Oct 21	06 Cheshvan	Menahem "Max" Honan
Oct 25	10 Cheshvan	Kilmer Lanier (KL) Hall
Oct 25	10 Cheshvan	Edith Jane Metz
Oct 27	12 Cheshvan	Martin Howard Goldner*
Oct 28	13 Cheshvan	Herschel Tzvi Rabinovich
Oct 30	15 Cheshvan	Pauline Rudoy*
Oct 30	15 Cheshvan	Dr. Herbert Pierre Secher*

****Light Memorial candle sunset of previous evening**

THE ORIGINAL SUCCOT CELEBRATION

By Ted Roberts, (1930-2020), the
Scribbler on the Roof



Succot, like perfect sweet and sour cabbage soup, has two flavors. A single holiday with two themes. We celebrate the bounty of the grape and olive

harvest in the Promised Land; also, we commemorate 40 hungry years of wanderings in that huge sand pile – the Sinai Peninsula – a garden that can only grow rocks.

The Chumash commands us to relive our wilderness days. "Ye shall dwell in booths seven days...that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths" when he took us out of Egypt. This holiday is one of the three special ones when the Israelite male was required to show up at the Temple.

A booth, a succah, must have been a challenge on those chilly Sinai nights. It's

cold as only a desert can be bone-cold at night. So you can bet most adults were drawn to the social warmth of the campfire. Conversation, maybe a little music from a homemade flute, and somebody might be passing around a skin of fermented goat's milk.

Some sages say that the Jewish love for books and literature was born on those long Sinai nights. You see, Moses and Aaron and their Levite kinfolk had plenty of time to sit around and talk since there was yet no temple to attend to. Moses, himself, didn't have the leisure of his brother Levites since he was busy as a Goshen scribe putting down all that he heard on the mountaintop. You remember he spent 40 days and nights listening to the Master Magistrate lay down the law.

And sitting around the fire, Moses passed on the message from the mountaintop. Those five books were full of tales of love and adventure. But full of rules, too, which occasionally brought on heavy eyelids and deep breathing to the nighttime audience huddled close around the fire. "Ten is enough," they groaned. "613? We can't even remember them. Let's go back to Genesis. Tell us some more about that garden." The men especially loved the story of Eve and the snake.

(Mark Twain, a spiritual skeptic who had a remarkably short attention span and therefore, never went to synagogue on Yom Kippur, remarked that nobody heard a word a preacher said after the first ten minutes. He would have hated my synagogue.)

So, the first and greatest prophet of Israel, blessed with divine understanding of human inattention and the human temptation to doze off when anyone lectured for over ten minutes, knew he had to vary his curriculum. So, he told stories, the best of which found their way into the oral tradition.

Moses was careful to only repeat the best, the most fabulous tales. He knew he had a tough audience. Often he told the story of Malcha, who invited the handsome, but weary traveler into her succah and quenched his thirst and put a platter of lamb chops in front of him. Too late did the innocent victim find that her succah was a chupah. The men hated this story. But you can bet that once in a while, when Moshe told the same story for the fifth time, some creative Israelite got up and told one of his own inventions. It was like the Improv where freshmen storytellers tried their skills.

But the mystics tell us that on those star-glittered nights when Moshe cut back on the adventure tales and went back to his revelation of the Word of G-d to Israel, the desert creatures beyond the light of the campfire, quietly listened. No night birds sang and even the desert fox refrained from calling his mate.

Time, as still as Horeb itself, ceased to exist so that the prophet could look both before and after. Did he not tell of history that was, and would be? Some say the scroll of time stood before him like a giant Torah as he recited to the people the oral tradition. Moses and the people talked. Many, many words – outnumbering the stars – filled the night. They talked 'til the moon grew pale and weary. And I think that's why the ancestors of these

wanderers predominate in today's world of words.

Historians, sociologists, anthropologists still today, wonder about this mystery of Judaism. I mean, how could it be that we're about .025 percent of the world's population, but we write about 20% of the books. (Check the best seller lists.) Why do we win all the Pulitzer Prizes? Why do we predominate in the world of entertainment, movies, and television? Jewish themes, Jewish scriptwriters, Jewish producers, Jewish actors,

What is it about words and their sequencing into literary art – like jewels on a bracelet – that attracts the former Children of Israel – now known as Jews?

It's almost like the old-fashioned antisemites used to say. Wherever you look, you see the Jew. Well, in the world of ideas it's as true as the wisdom in Proverbs. Where stories are told, you'll find Jews. But why?

I say it was those wild Sinai nights around the campfire when Moses told his tales. When the audience trooped back to their succahs, their wilderness huts, they had plenty to think about. Oh the dreaming that went on in those succahs. And it still goes on and on.